

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CU-02 MCT-01
ACDA-07 COME-00 SCA-01 SCS-03 A-01 OPR-02 CCO-00
/079 W

-----041659Z 129358 /50

O R 041617Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5309

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE FREETOWN 1436

LONDON FOR SEITZ

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINS, PINT, SL

SUBJ: SIERRA LEONE TWO DAYS BEFORE ELECTIONS

REF: FREETOWN 1404

1. SUMMARY. EXPECTED ELECTION VIOLENCE HAS BROKEN OUT IN BO
AND CONTINUED AT MOKANJI WITH AT LEAST SEVEN PEOPLE DEAD AND
NUMEROUS MORE INJURED. UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ARE ON ASIT-
DOWN STRIKE, BUT MOST SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE STILL
ATTENDING SCHOOL. SIERRA LEONE LABOR CONGRESS (SLLC) HAS
ISSUED STRONG PUBLIC STATEMENT ESPECIALLY CONDEMNING FACT THAT
SO MANY APC CANDIDATES HAD BEEN RETURNED UNOPPOSED. GOSL-
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CONTROLLED MEDIA HAS CARRIED PRACTICALLY NO REPORTS OF
DIFFICULTIES SURROUNDING THE ELECTIONS OR OPPOSITION TO THE
RETURN OF LARGE NUMBERS OF APC CANDIDATES UNOPPOSED. END SUMMARY.

2. ON MAY 3 LARGE NUMBERS OF SLPP SUPPORTERS GATHERED IN BO
TO COUNTER APC THUGS. THE RESULT WAS SERIOUS CLASHES IN THE
STREETS, WIDESPREAD USE OF TEAR GAS, AND REPORTED RAIDING OF

HOUSES BY ISU SECURITY MEN. REPORTS FROM RELIABLE OBSERVERS INDICATE THAT AT LEAST SEVEN WERE KILLED AND PERHAPS AS MANY AS 40 INJURED. AN UNEASY CALM APPEARS TO REIGN NOON MAY 4. LATEST RUMOR IN BO IS THAT RESERVOIR HAS BEEN POISONED AND TAP WATER UNSAFE. ALL AMERICANS WELL AND ACCOUNTED FOR.

3. DIFFICULTIES REPORTED REFTEL AT MOKANJI STARTED UP AGAIN THIS WEEK. MORE HOUSES WERE BURNED, AND NORTHERNERS, ESPECIALLY TEMNES, WERE ROUTED FROM THE AREA. IT IS CLEAR THAT THIS IS SYMBOLIC OF GROWING SERIOUS TRIBAL TENSION WITHIN THE COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY BETWEEN THE TEMNES AND THE MENDES.

4. FURTHER DISTURBANCES ELSEWHERE UPCOUNTRY ARE LIKELY, BUT INFORMATION IS NOT WIDELY AVAILABLE IN FREETOWN.

5. UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ARE ON A SIT-DOWN STRIKE, AND STUDENTS HAVE BEEN WARNED NOT TO LEAVE THE CAMPUS. SOME UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WERE REPORTED TO HAVE VISITED SECONDARY SCHOOLS YESTERDAY AND TO HAVE TOLD THE STUDENTS TO GO HOME EARLY, AND MOST DID; ABOUT SEVENTY PERCENT RETURNED TO SCHOOL TODAY.

6. MAY 3 LETTER TO PRESIDENT STEVENS BY SLLC IS CRITICAL OF HIS FAILURE TO RESPOND TO PREVIOUS DEMANDS AND DISCUSSIONS IN SPITE OF HIS HAVING PROMISED TO DO SO. SLLC CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION TO THEIR PREVIOUS DEMANDS AND FURTHER CALLS ON STEVENS TO DECLARE UNOPPOSED NOMINATIONS NULL AND VOID SINCE THERE WERE OPPOSITION CANDIDATES TO RUN AGAINST EACH ONE OF THE UNOPPOSED APC MEN, BUT THAT OPPOSITION CANDIDATES WERE PHYSICALLY PREVENTED FROM PRESENTING THEIR NOMINATING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAPERS. SLLC LETTER ENDS WITH ONLY SLIGHTLY VIELED THREAT. QUOTE CONSEQUENTLY, YOUR EXCELLENCY IS NOW BEING TOLD IN PLAIN AND SIMPLE LANGUAGE THAT IF THE SITUATION DETERIORATES ANY FURTHER NECESSITATING WORKERS NOT REPORTING FOR DUTY BECAUSE OF SECURITY RISKS THE COOPERATION OF THE SLLC WILL NOT BE FORTHCOMING. UNQUOTE.

6. COMMENT: WITH ELECTION DAY SO CLOSE, IT SEEMS AS IF THE APC HAS GAINED VICTORY IN ROUND ONE. THEY WILL SURELY WIN AT LEAST SOME OF THE SEATS BEING CONTESTED, THUS GIVING STEVENS HIS DESIRED MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT. THE NUMBER THE APC WINS MAY BE HIGHER THAN EXPECTED, SINCE MANY OF THOSE WHO WOULD NORMALLY BE ANTI-APC ARE INTIMIDATED FROM EVEN WALKING OUT ON THE STREETS ON ELECTION DAY. OMINOUS QUIET FROM STUDENTS AND FAILURE OF SLLC TO ACT UNTIL NOW MAY INDICATE POSSIBILITY THAT THESE GROUPS MIGHT MOVE IN CONJUNCTION WITH OFFICIAL PETITIONS BY SLPP CANDIDATES SUBSEQUENT TO ELECTIONS. NEXT WEEK MAY NOT BE QUIET EITHER. END COMMENT.
SAMUELS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, CIVIL DISORDERS, POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 04-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
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Expiration:
Film Number: D770156-0728
Format: TEL
From: FREETOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770597/aaaadfhh.tel
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